*Postgraduate Information Evenings 2020 - Science Transcript*

Sandy: Welcome to tonight's science postgraduate information evening.

I'd like to start with an acknowledgement of country. With respect for Aboriginal culture protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy thair traditional lands, Western Sydney University knowledge is the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (alsk referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradgjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of it’s work in their lands in Greater Western Sydney and beyond. .

So my name's Sandy Alexander Craze. I'm from the contact Service Center here at Western Sydney University and joining me tonight we have Dr. Mark Williams; Postgraduate Director and Professor Zhonghua Chen; Associate Dean, Engagement and International

Okay, so this is just a quick heads up that tonight's session is being recorded. Participation is optional. You can put your video on, share your audio and video we just want to let you know that this is being recorded and will be accessible at a later point. And if you do have any questions feel free to email our events team at the email, you can see down the bottom there.

OK, so the agenda tonight. Firstly, will be going through postgraduate study at Western Sydney University Mark and Zhonghua will run you through that. And we'll be talking a bit about Western Sydney at a glance. Quickly go through the application process. Although, if you have any specific application questions, on the main page of the postgraduate information sessions on the main hub, there is a link for application help with our admissions team. Okay, so you can get live web chat or help there with our admissions team.

Then we'll talk a bit about fees and then after our presentation will throw the floor open to an open Q&A. You're welcome to verbally ask a question or you can also type anything in the chat and and I'll be monitoring that and ask that of academics. Okay, so feel free at the end, once we've had out once we've completed that presentation to ask any questions, you do have again.

So what I'll do, without any further ado, I'll hand over to Mark and Zhonghua to take you through I'd do great research.

Zhonghua Chen: Okay.

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Zhonghua Chen. Today, I'm going to give you a short presentation about the High Degree Research at Western Sydney University. So at Western Sydney University. We offer a range of different the Higher Degrees by research.

 So the first one is immersive research. This is relatively new course we started offering this a few years ago and it's a very good pathway degree to a doctorate.

So the Master of Research Design is a two year research training degree that's change, the nature of the philosophy research as well as training associate with knowledge to translate engage and impact. So really, what are we trying to train our students are to look at doing research in that first year and build some solid foundation.

 So there are three core interdisciplinary research units and five discipline based subjects and in the second year there will be a full project. So it's in some ways like an honours. Honours doesn’t have course work but this one provide solid course work which will enable our students to pursue a PhD overseas, like going to the United States or in Europe, where they usually requires a master's, because our one year Honours is not usually acceptable by by their PhD courses. We have also PhD and Master of Philosophy.

So we offer traditional thesis based PhD and PhD by publication, as well as professional doctorates. So this is broader, but at this a school, we offer mostly traditional thesis based PhD, but students, they are really doing great, then they can publish for full paper research papers during their candidature. They can also change the PhD by publication.

So in other schools. They are Doctor of Education, Doctor of Create Arts. So at school of Science, we have the similar duration of a PhD, the three a year full time and or six year part time. So most of our students doing it full time. But some student, they're at work, they can also take it at a part time option. This will need to be negotiated with the Graduate Research School, and also, of course, with the with the supervisors.

We also offer the Master philosophy which is a two year full time course. Which is a kind of more of a reduced version of a PhD, but it's a two years but fully researched. So there is no coursework.

Western Sydney University- we are committed to really high impact research and we make our students getting the higher degree, but as well as be more suitable for the future job and career opportunities.

At School of Science, we have a range of disciplines. For example, we have Physical Chemistry, Separation Sciences, Probe Cell biochemistry, Forensic Investigations and many more. So basically at the school we cover big arrange of science. Anything you can think about science, we even cover astronomy space and and cancer research agricultural horticulture, and a lot of areas. So at this at the current School of Science, we have we have a just over 80 time academic staff members and we have a total of about 100 postgraduate students. And most of them are PhD students. We do have a lot of Master, Master research students, many of those areas are quite good.

As a school size, our research degrees are based on our research excellence. This is the ranking, which is ranked by the Excellent Research Australia and by Australian Research Council. So the ranking not ranked by the government. So we have agriculture and food science ranked as five star, soil science, plant biology, zoology, also ranked as Five stars. We have many other disciplines all ranked very high; medical science, biochemistry and cell biology for four stars. So Excellent in research actually make the students project very exciting and also made them more employable afterwards. And because most of the PhD, they were going to another maybe post doctorate or doing to the industry. Those systems actually training in PHD or masters will enable them to be in a better place for the future jobs either in research or in the industry.

So from a student perspective. There are opportunities and especially like I just mentioned earlier, the master research and math philosophy can really be helpful for students. They're looking for overseas research opportunities where they can go and finish this and do a PhD in top universities in Europe. Recently, we actually had a student did a master here, and chemistry and now he’s doing a PhD in Oxford University. So really, there are opportunities and we have good supervisors.

For each of our research students, they will get a chance to attend either a domestic conference or for PhDs, they will be a domestic conference and also international conference for them to present their results and to communicate with researchers across from different parts of the world so many opportunities. And in the School of Science, we have lots of different units; undergraduate and postgraduate, and the most high degree research students are usually, especially in the second year third year participating in teaching. So they can get teaching experience as well as earning some additional money to to support their, their study.

 And our students also very productive. So this is just a recent sort of a statistics. Our students publish every year on average about 120 scientific papers. So this is a really good achievement and that you can easily see many citations. That's the really the key part in School of Science will come you guys to come and register and come study high degree research with us. Thank you.

Mark Williams: Thanks so much.

Good evening. Oh, thank you for coming. My name is Mark Williams and I'm the Director of Postgraduate coursework of Western Sydney University, and I'm going to talk briefly about what can be done in this field at Western Sydney.

In science, we have two primary courses or degrees in the postgraduate coursework. Now postgraduate coursework is where you will do a combination of units where you attend workshops tutorials lectures became similar to what you would have done in your undergraduate degree. And then also, at the end of all masters work, you will actually do a short project, which actually can lead on to further study as Zhonghua mentioned in the last few minutes

 Now, unlike many other universities, we've decided to concentrate our coursework into areas where Western Sydney has (as Zhonghua was pointed out on the previous slides as well as) well above world class researches, lecturers and academics in the field and also fields where we have excellent facilities and are well established reputation.

So as a consequence. Okay. Well, there are units across a broad range of sciences available for you to study in these coursework, the ones where you concentrate your speciality are in Selected Fields. OK. And now this has, as I said, to different degrees, one which is fully online, which is the Masters of Forensic Science and then the Master of Science, the general one where you attend practical workshops and as I said do projects.

Now, the Master of Forensic Science is actually a shorter course, over three semesters where you do 12 units. The Master o Science is a two year course where you will do 16 units. Now within the Master of Science okay them being quite broad, you have to take on one specialization. And you can see here on the slide, we have four fairly overlapping specializations. As I mentioned before, we're trying to focus on areas that will give you a focused knowledge okay in agriculture, horticulture, And food science, which obviously is related and public health, which again is related to both those other three areas. So when you come and do a Master of Science at Western Sydney, you will be concentrated in a particular topic. Not to say we don't have a broad range of other sciences; from biology to bio-tech and chemistry. But our focus in the specializations is around food and agriculture.

Now associated with these longer courses, we have graduate diploma and graduate certificates, which re shorter versions of all of these two degrees. They also allow people without a bachelor's background to use a substantive employment record as an entry into these postgraduate studies. So people who have been in working in these industries for several years can actually come into the Graduate Certificate and eventually progress to improve their qualifications and improve their advancement in their work. OK, so the graduate diploma. That's a year course, two semesters. Okay. And the graduate certificate is just a single semester consisting of four years. And next slide, please, Emily.

OK, now the coursework can be taken, in case of general information, on full time and part time. Okay, now the admission directly into the master's program. Okay, you must have an undergraduate degree okay in science. Okay, or physical science related disciplines. And doesn't have to match the forensic science or the agriculture, just a generalized science will enable you be admitted. And as I said there mentioned before, you can use prolonged employment to get into the Graduate Certificate, if you don't have that background and then they're what we call nested degrees, which means you can go from the certificate into the diploma and eventually into the masters and complete the two years.

Now I mentioned there to two year degrees. However, we do recognize prior knowledge and prior employment and we do this through advanced standing so what you can do is you can present a case that you've already studied certain units that you have, which are part of these Masters Courses and you will get advanced standing and so that enables you to, for masters for example, of two years to actually shorten it down to one year.

Excuse me, all the degrees consist of a combination of compulsory unit. So was there some core units that everybody of the Master of Science does and then there are selections you can make, which we call alternative. It's not a free range selection. You can only select certain postgraduate units within the university as part of the remaining units to study. Next slide please.

Okay, so let's talk about the courses in particular. The master forensic science. Now this is a fully online degree. Okay, all of the classes are online. Okay, there is no face to face okay classes that you have to do. This is taken in conjunction at the present time with the University of Canberra, and the University of Florida. And there is actually Lucern, which is a Swiss university, is looking to actually come on board as well. So it's actually a collaboration between the four institutes and you do different units from the different universities, you're actually enrolled within Western Sydney, okay, but you do actually take units from the other universities.

As I said, this is take three months, three semesters 18 months of study. Okay, where you have 12 units. Now this is, not only is it online, and that's why it's separate from the master science, you use actually a high level physical this forensics disciplines. Okay, so you're going to do crime Scene Investigation, explosive analysis, toxicology, fingerprint identification, drug analysis. So all the units that are heavily into the forensic science. So that means this course is really an upskilling course. So you really need to have a background, some background, in forensics to actually start in your undergraduate degree. So, that's okay, very important with this one. It does start from the assumption that you do have some background knowledge.

Now as I said to you it is the collaboration between three universities, hopefully four in the near future. And this enables us to present you a broad variety of specializations. As I said from explosive identifications to DNA analysis, not simple things that one individual university would be a specialist in. Next slide please.

Okay, the master science. Now this okay is one that’s probably familiar for many universities. Okay, so this is campus based degree. So that means you attend workshops practical classes and occasionally lectures. it's delivered on two of our campuses at Western Sydney University. The Hawkesbury campus at the moment is the dominant place where this course takes place, but we also have the Parramatta course which has the business, the marketing and the nutritional units that are present at that place.

No the Hawkesbury campus is quite impressive with regards to these specializations and the Hawkesbury campus is actually a living, working farm and certainly has a 125-year background in agriculture, so it's well established with regards to that specialization. We've just recently in the last couple of years with in conjunction with Horticulture Australia, had a $7 million protected cropping greenhouse built and we have a world class specialization and you will have the opportunity to do projects as well as every day practical classes within these facilities. So that's why we have the Hawkesbury campus as well because we have those facilities, just at the campus there.

Okay, so this is a 16 unit course as I said you can shorten it by using advanced standing, you must do a minimum of 12 units in science, you can do the whole 16 in science. However, you can bring in other discipline units from business, marketing, Okay, up to a maximum of four. So you can combine a specialization in marketing with a specialization in agriculture, for example. Okay. Now as I said to you, you must complete a specialization and that will actually appear on your testamur so you get Master of Science bracket agriculture.

Okay. So currently, the Food Science and Public Health Nutrition have been running for two years now, and the agriculture specialization starts next year in February, and although it says in March next year the greenhouse horticulture is actually starting over summer. Okay and John wa is actually in charge of doing that.

Okay. Now, as I said, all the specializations are linked together so we don't cover all science disciplines as specializations. Okay, we're using our expertise to give you a Master of Science, which is highly focused in four different areas if you wish, that are linked together. As with both of the master of forensic science and the Master of Science itself, you must complete a project at the end of this. Now this project can be research based, it can be industry based or you can base it on a professional task, which is essential to any of these specializations. You also can complete sufficient research by taking a second project unit to make you eligible to progress onto a PhD program at Western Sydney and other universities within Australia.

Okay. So as I mentioned, we also have graduate diploma and certificates, which is shortened versions of these, which actually can lead on to the masters. We use these both as a shortened entry. And we also use it as an early exit from the masters. We know sometimes when you're working and attending university at the same time, things can happen. And so you can actually exit out of the masters and you can get the diploma or the certificate. So you don't lose any of your qualifications, with regards to that.

So as I said before that a diploma is eight units, which is a year of study, whereas the Graduate Diploma is 4 units. As I said, to these are all nested together so they build up towards the masters.

Now just with regards to the protective cropping and just mentioned, this was a new course starting in summer, as I mentioned before, and this has been done in conjunction with horticultural Australia. And this together with the agriculture is actually identified that at the present time in Australia, there is a significant shortfall of graduates in this field. And so that's why we bought these two new degrees online.

Okay, so here is the list of the courses we have in the postgraduate area. And I'd like to thank you for your attention. Hope you have a good evening.

Sandy: Thanks very much Mark and Zhonghua

Perfect. Now I'm just going to quickly run through the university's response to COVID 19 and let's start off with the fact that all classes have actually been moved online as well as the majority of Student Services. So, for example, our student central service and well being services, they've all been moved online; to live chat and phone call communication.

In terms of our online and on campus, study the universities will endeavor to deliver classes, both online and on campus. But this is dependent on requirements each unit. So all on campus classes will be delivered in restrictive numbers in order to allow for social distancing

Western Sydney University is committed to supporting our students for sure they can continue learning during the current pandemic and there are academic support services available to students.

We've also founded the coronavirus support line which is the central contact point for students and staff. It's responsible for managing and direct inquiries to the correct apartments and the team has provided a trusted platform so far for students seeking the best advice possible.

We've also set up a student hardship fund. Now the student hardship fund this assist students through the provision of grocery vouchers loan laptops and financial support. The centralized application process to this is allowing and efficient up to about five-day turnaround to assist students who are experiencing hardship.

Okay, we'll also talk briefly about the application process. If you should have any questions about the application process either domestic or international. We do have our admissions team on call tonight available via the web chat function during tonight's event. The link has just been posted there in the chat. So if you do have any admissions questions that can't be answered here, feel free to go and have a chat to our admission staff now domestic students

A domestic student is in Australia or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident of Australia or someone who holds a permit humanitarian visa and you can apply in one of two ways. Either directly to Western where the application process is free. Or through the university's admission center which there is an application fee for

International students if your international student, you can apply in one of two ways. Also, they are different, though. You can either apply online using our StudyLink portal. Or through an agent representative now for further information to find out whether you will need to apply through an agent representative, there's a wealth of information on our Western Sydney University international page. So if you Google for Western Sydney University International you'll find that. You'll be able to see there, whether you will need to apply online by studying link or through an agent.

Fees. Some key terms in our fee structure. A Commonwealth support a place is a government subsidized place where the remaining tuition fee can be deferred by eligible the domestic students on to a HECS help loan.

Fee Help loan is for eligible domestic students wishing to differ their tuition fees from a non Commonwealth support place course.

In terms of our domestic fees, the majority, post graduate courses at Western Sydney University our domestic full fee paying places. Australian citizens may be able to defer this tuition fee from full free paying courses on to a fee helpline.

And all postgraduate education courses and most post graduate nursing courses at Western Sydney are Commonwealth support of places and follow the undergraduate fee structure.

In regards international fees and international fees for our post graduate courses they can be found on our website. And all international students will be advised of the exact fees on your official offer letter, which will include your tuition fees and compulsory overseas International Student Health cover. And again, for more information for our international students, you can visit our international webpage or our Western Sydney fees page.